



**June 18, 2018**

**Dear Oona,** Mom said she is going to start calling me SHARK because some days I walk around the house or yard and randomly bite things. Like furniture, flower pots, trellises and anything that is just there. I have LOTS of chew toys in all rooms of the house. I get plenty of unrestrained run time, wrestling sessions with my brothers and, at 7 months of age, I now get to take walks with the big boys.

Mom pulls me aside and I get a gentle lecture about EXPECTATIONS and RULES, like don't destroy things. She keeps asking me when I will stop my SHARK behavior.

Can you help me out?

**Finn the SHARK.**(Hey, kinda like Mac the Knife)

**Dear Finn,**

Tell your mom she needs to batten down the hatches because the Brain Fairy may not pay you a visit until you're three years old. Why she waits so long, no one knows, but this seems to be the way with many young males.

Personally, I'm going to give her a piece of my mind when she *does*

show up because I've been coping with my own Tasmanian Devil nephew for two years. *Two*. When he's not in the grip of the hormonal cloud, Oisín is sweet, tender and affectionate. I can see the wolfhound he's going to be jussst within reach....but the the Crazies hit and the rodeo is back in town.

Young females go through the wild juvie stage too, but we tend to be more focused. Bentley, our little rescue hound, tells me I was a complete hellion until I turned one and after that, I hardly ever rolled him up and sat on him anymore. The boys just keep on whooping it up. Being a big dog, it just takes longer for maturity to chase them down.

Tell your mom to just keep drawing firm boundaries and lovingly, gently enforcing them. Training helps if you bring a LOT of cheese to the party. Just simple things like sit and stay teach self-control. Reward them generously with high value treats. But be prepared for those times of day when you're just going to blow off all your training and run all through the house like a buzz saw. Mom and dad still put Oisín in his X-pen if they have to be away from the house so he doesn't get into trouble tearing things up.

Who knows, maybe with training, patience and a lot of love, you'll win the brain lottery early. Otherwise, tell your mom she's in for a long haul. Try to keep it between the ditches, Finn...

**Love, Oona**

***Got a question? Send it to bob@thewildstare.com and Oona will get back to you as soon as she gets her nails done or she can prod the old guy to take dictation.***